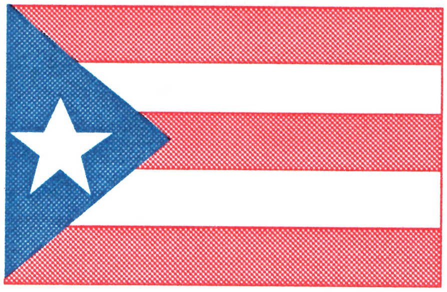
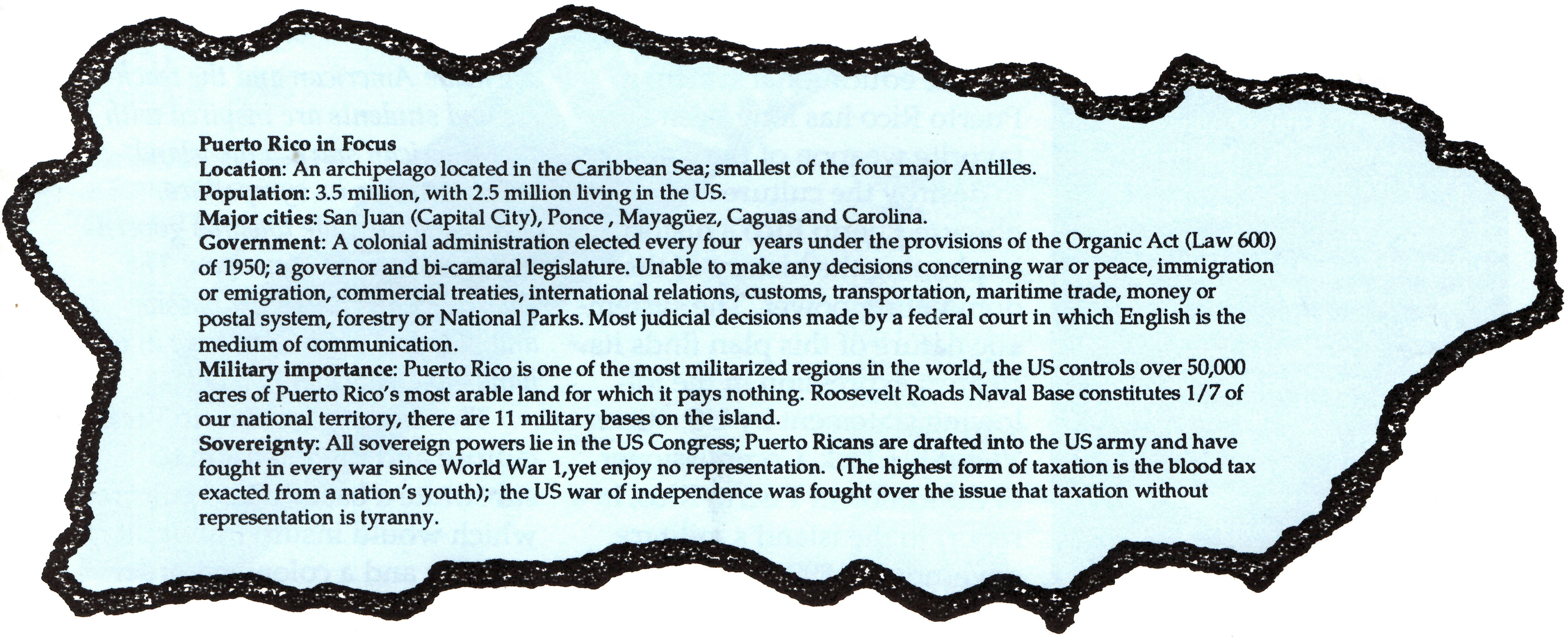
Puerto Rico: A People in Struggle

Declaration to the International Community

Regarding the Crime of Genocide Against the Puerto Rican People





Puerto Rico in Focus

Location: An archipelago located in the Caribbean Sea; smallest of the four major Antilles.

Population: 3.5 million, with 2.5 million living in the US.

Major cities: San Juan (Capital City), Ponce , Mayagüez, Caguas and Carolina.

Government: A colonial administration elected every four years under the provisions of the Organic Act (Law 600) of 1950; a governor and bi-camaral legislature. Unable to make any decisions concerning war or peace, immigration or emigration, commercial treaties, international relations, customs, transportation, maritime trade, money or postal system, forestry or National Parks. Most judicial decisions made by a federal court in which English is the medium of communication.

Military importance: Puerto Rico is one of the most militarized regions in the world, the US controls over 50,000 acres of Puerto Rico's most arable land for which it pays nothing. Roosevelt Roads Naval Base constitutes 1/7 of our national territory, there are 11 military bases on the island.

Sovereignty: All sovereign powers lie in the US Congress; Puerto Ricans are drafted into the US army and have fought in every war since World War 1,yet enjoy no representation. (The highest form of taxation is the blood tax exacted from a nation's youth); the US war of independence was fought over the issue that taxation without representation is tyranny.

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Declaration to the International Community Regarding the Crime of Genocide Against the Puerto Rican People

Since July 25, 1898, when the US militarily occupied the autonomous nation of Puerto Rico, US presence on the island has had as its basis the liquidation of the Puerto Rican national reality. Towards this end, the US government has redefined every mechanism at its disposal. To facilitate this barbaric proposition, the US government has transformed the institutions of education and medicine into genocidal tools to be used against our people. The destruction of our natural economy, and the development of a parasitic one, has resulted in a virtual diaspora for the Puerto Rican nation. This, coupled with the brutal and naked aggression against those who have maintained that the enemy of the Puerto Rican people is US imperialism, must clearly illustrate that a well-orchestrated genocidal plan against the Puerto Rican people exists.

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Article II of the Convention on the Prevention of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948 states that genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group:

- *Killing members of the group;*
- *Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;*
- *Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; and*
- *Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group.*

EDUCATION:
A Tool for the Destruction of the National Culture

The educational system in Puerto Rico has long been a favorite weapon of the colonizer to destroy the culture and obscure Puerto Rico's history; implanting the history of the dominating power. The systematic nature of this plan finds its clearest expression in the following statement by US citizen Victor S. Clark, Commissioner of Education of Puerto Rico, in a report to the island's military governor in 1899: *If the schools are made American and the teachers and students are inspired with the American spirit...the island will become in its sympathies, views and attitude towards government, essentially American. The Puerto Ricans are as yet passive and plastic...Their ideals are in our hands to create and to mold.*

The disdain for Puerto Rican culture and the intention to substitute a bastardized culture which would insure tranquility, stability and a colonized order on the island became the guiding principle of education in Puerto Rico for the next 50 years.

This policy of cultural genocide found its most glaring example in the abolition of Spanish as the language of instruction and the attempt to substitute English as the language of education, commerce and the courts. The colonial program also revolved around the promotion of US cultural activities, especially the celebration of holidays traditional to the US, but with no basis within our reality and culture.

The US acknowledged its failure to eradicate the Spanish language, on the island, through administrative reforms in 1948, which restored the use of Spanish in the schools. But to this day, education has as its basis the inculcation of the colonizers' view of Puerto Rico. History books continue to present this distorted image of the country: references to national heroes and patriots are omitted, the "smallness" of Puerto Rico is emphasized; "history" begins with the invasion of 1898, and "success" is equated with values, standards and norms.

Dr. Aida Negrón de Montilla, Puerto Rican educator, summed up this education for Americanization in 1972: *The 'careful' selection of reading material...the promotion of secondary-level student organizations—Civil Air Patrol, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls...all the curriculum content has been designed to create in Puerto Ricans a sense of total identification with the metropolis...*

Realizing that in order to destroy the Puerto Rican national reality, it is necessary to first destroy all centers of cultural and intellectual resistance, the US government directed the colonial apparatus to destroy two pillars of Puerto Rican national consciousness. In the 1970s, as a result of the 1971 student strike in which students seized the university and built barricades all around San Juan, the government divided the University of Puerto Rico into 9 scattered campuses to liquidate the base of student resistance to colonialism in San Juan. The government also targeted for destruction the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, which since 1956 had been in the forefront of preserving and enhancing Puerto Rican art, literature and culture. The government mandated a halt in all funding for this independent cultural center and its absorption into a single government agency of arts, recreation and sports.

This scheme for the destruction of Puerto Rico's culture designed by the US imperialists and their colonial counterparts was a central goal in this period, in order to exercise hegemony over every aspect of Puerto Rican life. They understand that the flower of Puerto Rico's liberation lies within the seed of Puerto Rico's culture.

FORCED EMIGRATION:
The Dispersion of the Puerto Rican Nation

One of the most devastating impacts of the US' efforts to liquidate the Puerto Rican national reality has been the forced dispersal or emigration of over two-fifths of the Puerto Rican people into the urban centers of the colonizing power.

Under the pretext that Puerto Rico was too "overcrowded" to sustain its own population, the government promoted emigration of Puerto Ricans from their homeland—with a population density of 62 inhabitants per square mile—to the barrios of New York—with 617 people per square mile. This supposed concern for the crowding of the Puerto Rican population did not prevent the US from taking over 13% of Puerto Rico's arable land for military bases. It became clear that the migration was not in fact based on any concern for the welfare of the Puerto Rican people, but on US interests.

Puerto Rico: A People in Struggle

Puerto Ricans in the US

(1986-census data)

2.5 million; mostly in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Illinois.

- *45.3% of Puerto Ricans in central cities lived in poverty, compared to 31.3% of Blacks, and 11.4% of whites;*
- *Among children, 59.2% of Puerto Ricans lived in poverty;*
- *Nearly 89% of Puerto Rican children in single parent families headed by women lived in poverty;*
- *Nearly 80% of Puerto Rican youth drop out of school; and*
- *Puerto Ricans have an unemployment rate of 14% as opposed to 6% for whites.*

In the period immediately following World War II, due to the failure of several economic projects instituted by the colonial government in Puerto Rico, and to the simultaneous re-emergence of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party as an important force; the government seized upon forced emigration and depopulation as a safety valve in order to forestall a potentially revolutionary situation on the island. This plan was carried out without the least concern for the well-being of the emigrants, who were seen as nothing more than human cargo to be shipped to the metropolis. Between 1950 and 1970, 615,000 emigrated to the US, while at the same time, thousands of Cuban exiles and North Americans were being implanted into the island's population to serve as a counter-revolutionary force.

As if casting out two-fifths of the population were not enough, the colonial government's total lack of concern for the emigrated population continued to manifest itself in the infra-human conditions in which our people were forced to exist. In cities across the US, our people lived in housing unfit for human habitation, while on the agri-business plantations of the Atlantic seaboard, Puerto Ricans toiled in a semi-feudal state.

These conditions are compounded by racist and national-chauvinist practices aimed at ridiculing the language, customs and values of the emigrants. The purpose of this was to create a permanent Puerto Rican underclass. One need only examine the reality in which the Puerto Rican people exist today to understand how well this plan was executed. According to a 1977 government study, ***Puerto Ricans on the Mainland: An Uncertain Future***, Puerto Ricans are the "poorest of the poor." They have the lowest educational attainment of any group; the highest drug addiction rate; the highest incidence of mental illness, the highest alcoholism rate; and Puerto Rican women have the highest rate of sterilization of any group in the US.

This is the legacy of colonialism for Puerto Ricans in the US who are truly living statehood. A situation which will be exacerbated as a consequence of major demographic changes envisioned as a result of the 2020 Plan. A plan which calls for the conversion of the island into 11 large military-industrial parks with a population reduction from the present 3.5 million to 1.5 million by the year 2020.

The seizure of our homeland, the destruction of our national economy and the forced emigration of our people to the US mainland, to serve as a permanent underclass for North American capital, are the results of US colonialism in Puerto Rico. **US colonialism in Puerto Rico is genocide!**

PUBLIC HEALTH: A Tool for the Decimation of the Puerto Rican Nation

To enforce its colonial domination, the US has turned every aspect of its supposedly "humanitarian" efforts in Puerto Rico into an assault on the Puerto Rican people. In 1932, Pedro Albizu Campos made this process clear in a "Circular to All Powers" prepared by the Nationalist Party: *When the number of hospitals increases… the epidemics of malaria, anemia, of tuberculosis and other infectious diseases with fatal effects also* *increase. For impartial observers, there exists no paradox. The American government repeats in Puerto Rico the method of extermination it put into effect in the continent against people of color … . The Hawaiian nation, which has been under the American empire approximately the same time as ours, is practically extinct …*

This **Circular** exposed the particular case of medical experimentation in which physicians from the Rockefeller Institute, established under the auspices of US "Public Health" efforts at Presbyterian Hospital in San Juan, were engaged in inoculating patients with cancer and viral diseases. Albizu presented documentary evidence, in the form of a letter to a colleague from a Dr. Cornelius P. Rhoads, a physician connected with the project. Rhoads said: *It would be ideal (here) except for the Puerto Ricans—they are beyond a doubt, the dirtiest, laziest, most degenerate and thievish race of men ever to inhabit the sphere… what the island needs is not public health, but a tidal wave or something to totally exterminate the population. It might then be usable. I have done my best to hasten the extermination by killing off eight and transplanting cancer into several more."*

A recent revelation indicated that there exists evidence to prove that Dr. Rhoads killed as many as 15 people.

This case is no aberration. The central thrust of US "Public Health" efforts in Puerto Rico since the 1920s has been massive sterilization of Puerto Rican women and men. The ***San Juan Star*** reported in 1975: *"On an international scale, Puerto Rico is the world leader in female sterilization"*. The percentage of Puerto Rican women of child-bearing age who have been sterilized is the highest in the world—over 40% and still climbing—up from 33% in 1974. It is so common that it is known simply as *la operación*.

Sterilization was initiated in the 1930s during a period of Nationalist struggle and institutionalized in the post-World War II renewed resistance.

At the same time, Puerto Rican women have been guinea pigs for other forms of contraception, especially in the early development of the oral contraceptive pill, Enovid. And high rates of sterilization and other medical problems are recorded among Puerto Rican workers in US-owned petrochemical and pharmaceutical operations in Puerto Rico, which operate without occupational health and safety or environmental protection controls, despoiling Puerto Rico's land and waters.

La Operación in Focus

- Over 25% of Puerto Rican men have been sterilized;
- In 1949, 18% of hospital births were followed by sterilization; today, the percentage is even higher;
- Puerto Rico's birth rate dropped 36% from 1941 to 1970;
- In 1947, 7% of Puerto Rican women had been sterilized;
- By 1954, the percentage had more than doubled to 17.5%;
- In 1974 and 1975 , twenty-five free sterilization clinics, each capable of a thousand sterilizations a month, opened in Puerto Rico.
- In the last decade, 17 municipalities in the island's interior have experienced zero population growth.

Since 1986, nearly 3,000 cases of premature thelarche in children from 8 months to 8 years old have been diagnosed. They have experienced menstruation, developed breasts and pubic hair, this may well be attributed to the large amounts of estrogen in the island's atmosphere due to the fact that Puerto Rico produces nearly 90% of the birth control pills used in the US.

In 1988, several dozen cases of "mountain leprosy", among Puerto Rican soldiers who have been sent on training exercises to Panama with the Puerto Rican Army National Guard (PRANG), were reported. Symptoms of "mountain leprosy", as it is called in Central America, include ulcerated sores, constant diarrhea, fever and itching; while the disease is clinically "curable" there are constant relapses.

This is the benefit which North American society has bestowed upon the Puerto Rican people—a health service which assures the eradication of the Puerto Rican nationality.

A Call to Conscience

IMPRISONED

Prisoners of War

Haydeé Beltrán
Edwin Cortés
Elizam Escobar
Ricardo Jiménez
Oscar López Rivera
Adolfo Matos
Dylcia Pagán
Alberto Rodríguez
Alicia Rodríguez
Ida Luz Rodríguez
Luis Rosa
Alejandrina Torres
Carlos Alberto Torres
Carmen Valentín

Political Prisoners

Lucy Berríos Berríos
Jaime Delgado
Dora García
Antonio Camacho Negrón
Juan Segarra Palmer

INDICTED

Elías Castro
Jorge Farinacci
Hilton Fernández Diamante
Orlando González Claudio
Ivonne Meléndez
Luis Colón Osorio
Angel Díaz Ruíz
Filiberto Ojeda Ríos
Isaac Camacho Negrón

FREE ON BAIL

Roberto José Maldonado
Norman Ramírez Talavera

EXILED

Guillermo Morales

PERSECUTED BY THE FBI

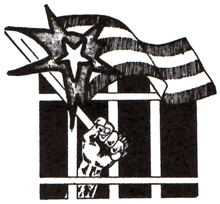
Luis Rosado Ayala
Avelino González Claudio
Norberto González Claudio
Victor Gerena
Roberto José Todd Pagán

THREATENED BY THE GRAND JURY

Carlos Alejandro
Samuel Sánchez
Linda Backiel

DISAPPEARED

Julio Pinto Gandía



During the UN Decolonization Committee hearings on the colonial case of Puerto Rico held on August 16-18 1989, the United States insisted that Puerto Rico was an internal affair and that the Committee should eliminate it from its agenda, now that the US and Puerto Rico have embarked upon the "democratic" and "decolonizing" road to resolve the political status of Puerto Rico.

While this is what they hypocritically state, the truth is very different. First, the proposed referendum for Puerto Rico does not meet the minimum international requirements of a democratic and decolonizing plebiscite. Secondly, it is important to note that the referendum will take place in a very disadvantageous and repressive atmosphere for *independentistas*. At present, there exist over 125,000 files on *independentistas* in the hands of the colonial government's repressive agencies, many thousands more are in the hands of the FBI, dozens of patriots are incarcerated, persecuted, indicted, exiled and disappeared.

As a gesture of good faith and conscience, the US should comply with the following minimum demands, before it embarks on any "changes" regarding the island's status:

- ■ *Cease all forms of persecution against those who struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico, including the destruction of any and all dossiers and files held by the FBI or other repressive agencies containing information about independence activists.*
- ■ *Cease all legal proceedings against any independence activists; specifically the August 30th patriots.*
- ■ *Grant unconditional amnesty to all Puerto Rican prisoners of war and political prisoners.*

This is the Repressive Picture that *Independentistas* Confront:

- ■ *There exist 125,000 files of activists that have been surveilled, threatened and harassed by the colonial government of Puerto Rico.*
- ■ *Many thousands more files are in the hands of the FBI, CIA, NSA and other agencies.*
- ■ *There exist dozens of persecuted, jailed activists, indictees, grand jury resisters, exiled and disappeared.*

A Call to Action

April 1990: Month of International Solidarity with Puerto Rican POWs and Political Prisoners

The decade of the 1990s will definitively be a watershed for human liberation: the United Nations has proclaimed it (the US being the sole objector) as the Decade to end Colonialism; it will mark the 500th anniversary of the European conquest of the Americas (which initiates the modern forms of racism and colonialism); it has been ushered in by an extraordinary unfettering of the human spirit all over the world, from Beijing to Johannesburg, from Namibia to El Salvador; this decade has also been inaugurated by the release of untold numbers of political prisoners; Nelson Mandela, the heroic ANC leader is soon expected to be released from a South African prison. Yet, while all over the planet, prison gates are flying open, in the US the number of political prisoners is increasing; there are currently over 100 political prisoners in the US.

Among them are 19 Puerto Rican Patriots incarcerated for their activities related to the internationally recognized struggle for Puerto Rican Independence; of these, fourteen have assumed the position of Prisoner of War as recognized by the 1977 Additional Protocols I and II to the 1949 Geneva Convention.

April 4, 1990 will mark ten years of incarceration for eleven of these patriots. Ten years of physical and psychological torture; imprisoned thousands of miles away from family and friends; held in isolation through the use of sensory deprivation—whereby a prisoner is deprived of almost all human contact and held in small cells without any sensorial stimulation. This deplorable situation must change. Efforts to demand respect for their human rights and win unconditional release must intensify.

Things That Are Being Done:

Coordinated campaigns are beginning to come together to expose the existence and the inhuman prison conditions of these activists and freedom-fighters; and to demand general amnesty for them by 1992. Among these are:

- *a resolution by the 9th Conference of the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Nations in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, demanded the "freedom and unconditional amnesty for all independence activists (Puerto Rican) incarcerated (in US jails) for political reasons."*
- *a special declaration which denounces the human right violations of political prisoners in the US adopted by the International Conference on Criminology '89 in Havana, Cuba, November 18-24, 1989.*
- *the organization, in the US, of the* ***Freedom Now! Campaign for Amnesty and Human Rights for Political Prisoners in the United States*** *(a broad coalition of religious, civic and political groupings), which will sponsor an* ***International Tribunal on Political Prisoners*** *in New York City on April 27-29. The purpose of the* ***Tribunal*** *will be to hear the indictment against the US for holding political prisoners; and violating their most basic human rights; and to expose the fact that US jails and prisons have abandoned all pretense at "rehabilitating" inmates and are increasingly becoming concentration camps for warehousing the youth from the ghettos and barrios.*
- *the* ***National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners*** *in the US, and the* ***CUCRE*** *(Unitary Committee Against Repression in Puerto Rico) have declared April 1990 as the* ***International Month of Solidarity with Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners.***

We call upon all freedom-loving and progressive people the world over to join us in the efforts to stop human rights violations in the US by demanding respect for the human rights of all political prisoners, as well as a general amnesty by 1992.

Things You Can Do:

- *ORGANIZE a support committee to work on the case of these Puerto Rican Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War, as well as other political prisoners in US jails;*
- *ORGANIZE a delegation in your country to attend the* ***International Tribunal on Political Prisoners*** *to be held in New York City during the weekend of April 27-29;*
- *CONTACT other human rights, civic or religious groupings in your country to discuss the issue of Political Prisoners in the US;*
- *ORGANIZE a petition drive to US President George Bush demanding amnesty for the Puerto Rican POWs and political prisoners, as well as the approximately 100 other political prisoners in US jails; mail letters, cards, telegrams ;*
- *REQUEST a meeting with the US ambassador in your country to discuss the existence of political prisoners in US jails and demand a general amnesty by 1992;*
- *ORGANIZE political actions during the month of April: forums, pickets, vigils and other forms of political activity to call attention to the plight of political prisoners in US jails;*
- *ORGANIZE a tour of representatives of the Freedom Now! Campaign (a coalition organized in the US to expose the existence of political prisoners, as well as to work for their release) to visit your country, to talk to church, schools, unions, women's groupings, etc;*
- *ORGANIZE press conferences and write articles for your local press and media around the situation of political prisoners in the US;*
- *ORGANIZE a showing of reknown artist and POW Elizam Escobar's artwork, which has been exhibited across the US and Puerto Rico.*

In addition you can:

- *Write to the Political Prisoners and* ***Libertad*** *and* ***Informe/Update,*** *(publications of the National Committee) Keep us informed of your work.*
- *Get organizations to adopt the Puerto Rican POW who has requested political asylum in your country (see page 11).*
  - *–Get to know a POW (family /background) ;*
  - *–Demand that your government grant him/her asylum.*

REPRESSION: The Physical Destruction of the Independence Movement and the Puerto Rican People

US imperialism, as we have stated, exercises absolute control over the principal aspects of the political, economic and cultural life of Puerto Ricans. In the face of this aggression, many thousands of patriots have struggled for generations to free their homeland. To suppress this struggle and to terrorize the Puerto Rican people, the repressive forces of the US and the colonial regime have applied a campaign of naked repression, murdering hundreds of patriots and imprisoning and persecuting thousands. This has been paralleled by brutal attacks by the police on Puerto Rican communities in the US, as well as on the island, in an effort to crush resistance and to prevent the development of a radical independentist base among the Puerto Rican people.

The repression of the independence movement has been written in blood, beginning with the invasion of the island and the subsequent two years of military government needed to suppress guerrilla struggle against the invaders. The list includes the massacres of Rio Piedras in 1935 and of Ponce in 1937, when 20 *independentistas* were killed and 200 wounded by police at a rally demanding freedom for Albizu Campos, Juan Antonio Corretjer and other Nationalist Party leaders imprisoned in the US on charges of seditious conspiracy.

The repression continued through the years, with the summary execution of Nationalists Elias Beauchamp and Hiram Rosado at police headquarters in San Juan; the disappearance of the corpse of the patriot Angel Esteban Antongiorgi; in the torture and psychological attacks against Puerto Ricans imprisoned in the US for refusing obligatory US military service in WW II and Korea; in the enactment of the "Muzzle Law" in 1948, which made any advocacy of independence a crime against the US; the mass arrests of Nationalist Party cadres and other *independentistas* in the wake of the Jayuya Rebellion of 1950, in which many patriots were killed or wounded by police and National Guard forces; and in which the civilian population of Puerto Rican towns were strafed and bombed by the US Air Force; in the medical executions by the yankee jailers of Albizu Campos and later of Andrés Figueroa Cordero, one of the Five Puerto Rican Nationalists imprisoned for a combined total of over 125 years for the defense of their homeland in the 1950s, on charges which again included sedition against the US government.

In the 1960s, '70s and '80s the bloody list includes the murder of activists in US jails, like Young Lords Party member Julio Roldan and Tito Peréz in New York and Manuel Ramos in Chicago; the frame-up incarcerations of Carlos Feliciano and Eduardo Cruz on fabricated charges of bombings in the US; the murder of student Antonia Martínez in Rio Piedras by police attacking anti-ROTC protests; the killing of Angel Charbonier and Eddie Ramos in Mayagüez in a bombing carried out by right-wing terrorists organized by the FBI and CIA; the lengthy imprisonment of Martin Sostre for his activities in support of Black and Puerto Rican liberation in New York State; the disappearance of Nationalist Party leader Julio Pinto Gandia; the frame-up and exile of Humberto Pagán, a leader of the 1971 student strike at the University of Puerto Rico; the arrest of Juan Antonio Corretjer, Consuelo Lee Corretjer and the entire Central Committee of the Puerto Rican Socialist League in 1971 on weapons charges, which dragged on for nearly a decade before the last proceedings were dropped against Doña Consuelo Lee Corretjer; the assassination of Santiago Mari Pesquiera, son of independence leader Juan Mari Bras; the kidnapping, torture and murder of Teamster organizer and independence activist Juan Rafael Caballero by a death squad within the colonial police; the political internment of nearly two dozen Puerto Rican activists and their supporters by federal Grand Juries "investigating" the **FALN**, and seeking the persecution of the entire independence movement from US since the mid-1970s to the present.

Even today, several activists are being threatened with grand jury subpoenas, and attorney Linda Backiel, a supporter of Puerto Rican independence, is facing a possible jail sentence for contempt of grand jury within the next few weeks.

The Grand Jury is only one aspect of the current wave of repression, which is directed expressly at isolating and destroying the revolutionary independentist forces who stand in the way of US efforts to further "rationalize" the status of Puerto Rico in order to deal with the current political and economic crisis of the Commonwealth. This period was initiated immediately on the heels of a United Nations' condemnation of US repression of the independence movement. On July 25, 1978 colonial police entrapped and executed at Cerro Maravilla two young *independentistas*, Carlos Soto Arrivi and Arnaldo Dario Rosado, through the efforts of a police agent, informer and provocateur, Alejandro González Malave. Testimony by a taxi driver at the scene, and also by Lieutenant Julio Andrades, one of the police officers involved in the execution have made it clear that this was a cold-blooded murder carried out under the direct instructions of the pro-statehood governor Carlos Romero Barcelo and subsequently covered up by a white-wash investigation by President Carter's Administration. González Malave was also involved in the arrest of eight other *independentistas* whom he accused of participation in an armed clandestine formation.

POLITICAL PRISONERS JAILED FOR 25 YEARS OR MORE

Lolita Lebrón
Rafael Cancel Miranda
Irving Flores
Andrés Figueroa Cordero
Oscar Collazo (29 years)

At the same time, Nydia Esther Cuevas and Pablo Marcano García were arrested and tried for their takeover of the Chilean Consulate in San Juan and sentenced to long-terms in US prisons. Another captured independence fighter, Guillermo Morales, who also took the POW stance after his capture in an unexplained explosion in a Queens, New York apartment in 1978. Despite medical mistreatment and the loss of fingers of both hands, he later escaped from Bellevue Hospital in New York to Mexico in 1979, residing there until his arrest by INTERPOL on May 26, 1983. After having served a prison sentence of 5 1/2 years, during which time the US used every means at its disposal, (including a plan approved by National Security Council Advisor Oliver North and US Attorney General Edwin Meese for his "escape" and assassination) to force his extradition to the US. Instead, the Mexican government released Guillermo and provided him safe passage to Havana, Cuba, where he currently resides as a free man.

In May of 1979, 21 *independentistas* were arrested by US Military Police for protesting the genocidal US Navy presence in Vieques, an inhabited island 75% of whose land is occupied by naval bases and whose waters are used for bombing practice and maneuvers. One of these 21, Angel Rodríguez Cristobal, was singled out for brutality from the beginning. This leader of the Puerto Rican Socialist League, who had taken a POW stance, was found dead, hanged in his isolation cell in Tallahassee, Federal Prison in Florida on November 11, 1979. Physical evidence of blood in his cell and a gash over his eye, as well as the statements of other prisoners, make it clear stance of refusing to recognize the jurisdiction of the US court, and declaring himself a Prisoner of War, the position which brought down the government's murderous attacks, has also immortalized him. Subsequently, many of the other Vieques defendants served prison terms in exile in the US. The Vieques struggle has continued through the '80s and the island municipality remains an arena of US colonial repression.

The fundamental challenge to this repression has been made by Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, accused of being members of the **Fuerzas Armadas de Liberación Nacional (FALN)**, combatants for Puerto Rican independence who were captured in Evanston, Illinois on April 4, 1980, and who have refused to recognize US jurisdiction over themselves. Instead, they have demanded their right under international law, as anti-colonial freedom fighters, to be tried by an international tribunal or released.

On August 30, 1985, over 300 FBI agents undertook, what some have called, the 2nd US invasion of Puerto Rico; raiding 38 homes and organizations, and arresting 16 Puerto Rican *independentistas* and charging them with the $7.5 million expropriation of the Wells Fargo Company in Hartford, Connecticut. One of the arrested, Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, was held under the Bail Reform Act of 1984 for 33 months without bail; making him the longest held political prisoner in US history to be held without bail.

Police repression in Puerto Rico (the police department has files on 125,000 people it considers subversive), and in Puerto Rican communities in the US, is not restricted to *independentistas*, but has steadily increased against the people in general, in a parallel attempt to terrorize the population. The attacks on Puerto Rican and other Third World communities are part of a strategy outlined in the Trilateral Commission's Report, ***Crisis of Democracy***, which is really a blueprint for a developing fascist order in the US directed against Third World people within US, borders, whose human rights struggles are judged to represent an "excess of democracy" and a threat to imperialist stability. Police terror and Bush's so-called War against Drugs, which is really a war against Third World communities within the US, is part of an attempt to effectuate the bantustanization of a population deemed marginal; transferring them out of the central cities, where they pose a challenge to the security of the power structures of industry and finance, to isolated pockets of population in a white megapolis. The cases of Rafael Cruz and Julio Osorio in Chicago, murdered by police in an attack on the Puerto Rican Day festivities in 1977; of Luis Baez, shot 25 times by New York police; and of the two Puerto Rican men shot by an off-duty policeman in New York because he "thought they were in the **FALN**," are only the tip of the iceberg. Similarly in Puerto Rico, cases like that of Adolfina Villanueva, killed by police carrying out an eviction, is only too common. The 300 families whose community of Villa Sin Miedo was razed in 1982 and most recently, the US Navy, trying to evict hundreds of families on the island municipality of Vieques, are continuing testimony to the vicious attacks on our people.

A publication by the External Affairs Secretariat of the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Puertorriqueño (MLN-PR). For more information:
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Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Puertorriqueño,
PO Box 477194, Chicago, IL 60647
USA

Prisoners of War

Alberto Rodríguez #92150-024 (B-3)
Edwin Cortés #92153-024 (B-2)
Ricardo Jiménez #88967-024 (A-2)
P.O. Box 1000
Lewisburg, PA 17837

Elizam Escobar #88969-024
FCI Colorado Unit
P.O. Box 1500
El Reno, OK 73036

Oscar López-Rivera #87651-024
P.O. Box 1000
Marion, IL 62959

Adolfo Matos #88968-024
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Lompac, CA 93436

Alejandrina Torres #92152-024
Dylcia Pagán #88971-024
Ida Luz Rodríguez #88973-024
Haydeé Torres #88462-024
Carmen Valentín #88974-024
FCI Pleasanton
5701 8th Street, Camp Parks
Dublin, CA 94568

Alicia Rodríguez #N07157
P.O. Box 5007
Dwight, IL 60420

Luis Rosa #N02743
Box 711
Menard, IL 62259

Carlos Alberto Torres
#88976-024
FCI - 902 Renfroe
(Delta A)
Talladega, AL
35160

Political Prisoners

Jaime Delgado #94736-024 (B-1)
USP
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Dora García #94735-024
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Juan Segarra-Palmer
#15357-077
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Marianna, FL 32446

Luz M. Berríos Berríos #24582-004
Antaeus Unit
3301 Leestown Road
Lexington, KY 40511

Antonio Camacho-Negrón
#03587-069
FCI McKean (Unit 2)
PO Box 8000
Bradford, PA 16701

Freedom Fighters,
Not Terrorists!

The Puerto Rican Prisoners of War submitted a petition each to the following countries officially requesting political asylum. This request was made in August of 1988.

Carmen Valentín
Carlos Alberto Torres
Haydeé Beltrán
Alejandrina Torres
Luis Rosa
Ida Luz Rodríguez
Alicia Rodríguez
Edwin Cortés
Elizam Escobar
Dylcia Pagán
Oscar López Rivera
Ricardo Jiménez
Adolfo Matos
Alberto Rodríguez

Japan
Austria
Greece
Italy
Portugal
Spain
Luxemburg
Finland
France
Holland
Sweeden
Norway
Denmark
Belgium

CONCLUSION

The record of US imperialism in regard to Puerto Rico is clear. The facts which we have cited, such as the forced emigration of two-fifths of the population; the sterilization of 40% of Puerto Rican women and one-fourth of the men; the jailing and murders of *independentistas* and police terror against the community at large, show that the US—not only in the juridical definition, but in fact,—is waging a genocidal war against the Puerto Rican people to enforce its illegal colonial domination of our homeland. We call upon the international community to render judgement on our claim.

For More Information:

- *National Committee to Free Puerto Rican POWS and Political Prisoners*
  PO Box 476698
  Chicago, IL 60647, USA

- *Freedom Now! Campaign for Amnesty and Human Rights for Political Prisoners in the United States.*
  59 E. Van Buren, #1400
  Chicago, IL 60605 USA
  (312) 663-4399

- *CUCRE (Unitary Committee against Repression)*
  Aptdo 20190
  Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico
  00928

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